

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 AF-06 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-01 INR-07

L-02 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 RSC-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

USIA-06 SAM-01 NIC-01 COME-00 EB-07 LAB-04 SIL-01

/077 W

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R 211500Z JAN 75

FM AMEMBASSY LISBON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1484

INFO AMCONSUL LOURENCO MARQUES

AMCONSUL LUANDA

AMEMBASSY MADRID

AMCONSUL OPORTO

AMCONSUL PONTA DELGADA

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT, PO

SUBJ: MDP DECLARES ITS AVAILABILITY FOR GOVERNMENT

SUMMARY: MDP LEADERS HAVE DECLARED THEY READY TO TAKE PLACE IN GOVERNMENT IF CALLED. MDP ALSO PUBLICALLY SUPPORTED ELECTIONS FOR FIRST TIME, ALTHOUGH WITH PROVISIO THAT PROGRESSIVE ADVANCES ALREADY MADE NOT BE UNDONE IN WRITING OF NEW CONSTITUTION. TO DEFEND SUCH ADVANCES, OF WHICH NEW LABOR LAW ONE, MDP CALLED FOR PRIOR AGREEMENT AMONG PARTIES ON TEXT OF CONSTITUTION. MDP ALSO RECOMMENDED NOBEL PEACE PRIZE FOR AFM. END SUMMARY

1. COMMUNIST FRONT MOVIMENTO DEMOCRATICO PORTUGUES (MDP) LEADERS GAVE LONG PRESS CONFERENCE IN LISBON JANUARY 20, MOST OF WHICH DEVOTED TO DEFENSE OF UNITARY LABOR CONFEDERATION AND TO ATTACKS ON PPD AND PS FOR THEIR OPPOSITION TO "UNICIDADE" CONCEPT. PRIMARY MESSAGE MDP LEADERS WISHED TO CONVEY, HOWEVER, WAS THAT MDP PREPARED TO ASSUME GOVERNMENTAL RESPONSIBILITIES

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IF CALLED UPON. SUCH PARTICIPATION, IN WORDS OF JOSE TENGARRINHA,

WOULD "REINFORCE PROGRESSIVE BENT OF GOVERNMENT."

2. PARTY ALSO STATED THAT WHILE UPCOMING ELECTIONS "SUBJECT TO UNFAVORABLE CONDITIONING FACTORS" FROM ITS POINT OF VIEW, MDP BELIEVES THAT ELECTIONS ARE IMPORTANT AND SHOULD BE HELD. HOWEVER, ELECTIONS SHOULD NOT PRODUCE CONSTITUTION WHICH "UNDOES WHAT HAS ALREADY BEEN CONQUERED" FOR WORKERS (THIS OBVIOUS REFERENCE TO STATEMENT BY JUSTICE MINISTER SALGADO ZENHA A FEW DAYS AGO THAT DRAFTERS OF NEW CONSTITUTION MIGHT INSERT CLAUSE ABOLISHING UNITARY LABOR CONFEDERATION. ELECTIONS WOULD SERVE "ONLY TO CONFIRM OPTIONS ALREADY MADE AND TO PEN UP NEW ONES." PARTIES SHOULD THEREFORE AGREE ON TEXT OF NEW CONSTITUTION IN ADVANCE IN ORDER TO ENSURE NO STEPS BACKWARDS ARE INCORPORATED IN IT.

3. FINALLY, EULOGIZING AFM FOR ITS DEFENSE OF DEMOCRACY AND ITS EFFORTS IN DECOLONIZATION, MDP SAID IT WAS PROPOSING THAT THE ARMED FORCES MOVEMENT COLLECTIVELY RECEIVE NOBEL PEACE PRIZE.

4. COMMENT: MDP HAS NOT BEEN IN GOVERNMENT SINCE CRISIS LEADING TO RESIGNATION OF PRIME MINISTER PALMA CARLOS LAST JULY. MDP, LIKE CDS, WOULD LIKE A MINISTERIAL SLOT BOTH TO GAIN LEGITIMACY ACCRUING FROM MEMBERSHIP IN GOVERNING COALITION, AND TO BE ABLE TO TILT BALANCE IN CABINET TOWARDS POSITIONS IT FAVORS. ODDS THAT CDS WILL BE INCLUDED IN PRE-ELECTION GOVERNMENT NIL, WHEREAS MDP CONTINUES TO HAVE HOPE THAT RUPTURE OF EXISTING COALITION WILL PROVIDE OPENING FOR IT IN GOVERNMENT. PPD AND PS STILL APPEAR FIRM, HOWEVER, IN THEIR DETERMINATION TO KEEP MDP OUT OF GOVERNMENT.

5. UNTIL AFM STATEMENT A FEW DAYS AGO THAT ELECTIONS WOULD BE HELD ON SCHEDULE, MDP REFRAINED FROM MAKING STATEMENTS IN FAVOR OF HOLDING OF ELECTIONS. LIKE A PILOT FISH, MDP FOLLOWS THE TURNS AND TWISTS OF THE AFM, KEEPING CLOSE TO OFFICIAL POLICY BUT ATTEMPTING TO SWAY ITS COURSE LEFTWARDS, BY PERSUASION OR SO IT APPEARS, FLATTERY (NOBEL PEACE PRIZE). IT HAS NOW FOR FIRST TIME PUBLICLY, IF UNENTHUSIASTICALLY, DEFENDED HOLDING OF ELECTIONS.

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